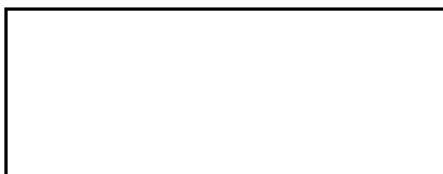


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15 April 1956



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CURRENT INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

DOCUMENT NO. 19

NO CHANGE IN CLASS.

1. DECLASSIFIED

CLASS. CHANGED TO: TS 2009

NEXT REVIEW DATE:

AUTH: HR 70

DATE: 12-16-71

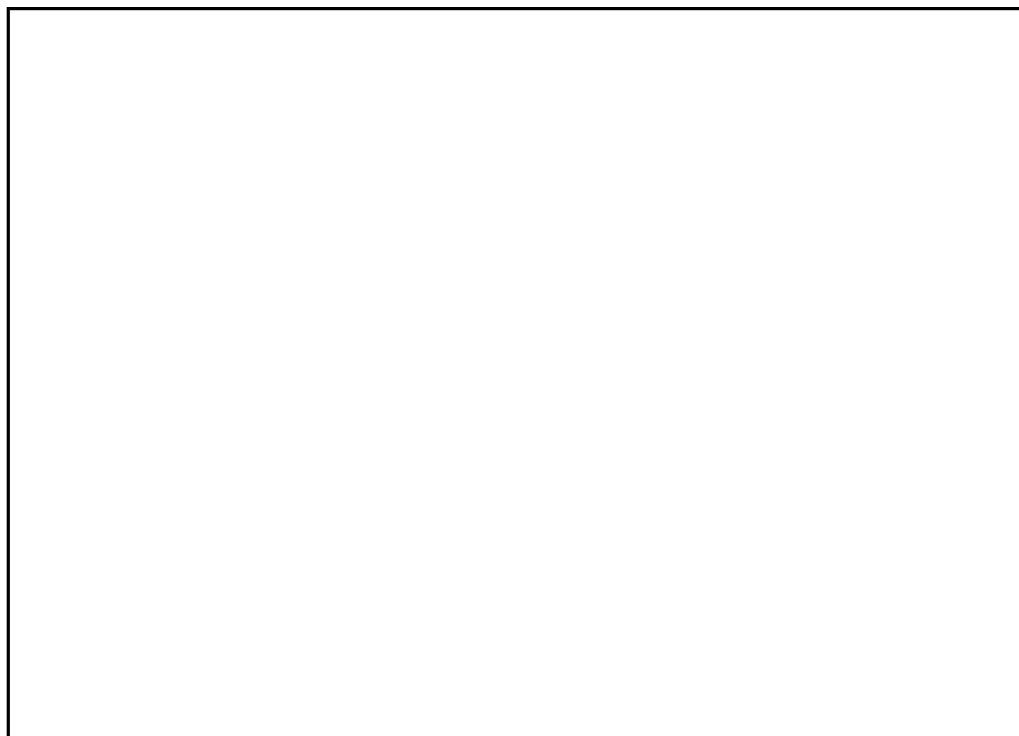
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2. USSR OFFERS ARMS TO LEBANON

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The Soviet military attaché in Beirut offered in early April to supply Lebanon with antitank weapons, tanks and planes, according to General Chehab, Lebanese

chief of staff. Chehab stated he had declined the offer by saying that Lebanon did not have funds for this purpose.

On 13 April, Chehab informed the American military attaché that Lebanon urgently needed 24 recoilless 105 or 106-mm. antitank guns and 50 to 100 rounds of ammunition per gun. He indicated that price was no object as the Lebanese military budget for this year had just been increased by 7 million Lebanese pounds to permit additional procurement.

Comment

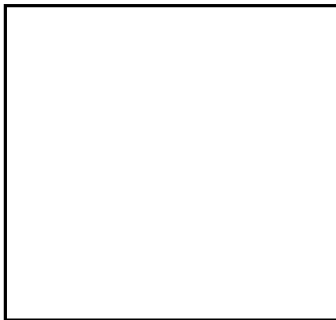
The Soviet offer of military assistance to the Lebanese ~~was~~ probably made in an attempt to encourage Lebanon to identify itself more closely with the Egyptian-Saudi-Syrian bloc, which is now receiving arms from the Soviet bloc. The USSR may have estimated that the new Lebanese cabinet headed by Prime Minister Yafi, who is known for his anti-Western sentiments, would be more open to Soviet offers than previous governments.

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3. INDONESIA GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCES WILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT SOVIET AID


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Indonesian foreign minister Abdulgani told the press on 12 April that Indonesia had agreed in principle to accept a recent Soviet offer to extend economic and technical aid. Abdulgani said the proposal had not yet been studied in detail so that the amount involved and whether it would be a grant or a loan, were not yet clear.

Comment

Presumably negotiations to define the offer are in progress. The Soviet ambassador said on 10 April that the aid might be applied to any fields including agriculture and industry.

Previous Soviet offers have been ignored by the Indonesian government. Its present receptiveness has probably been influenced by recent examples of Burma and India in accepting Soviet aid. 
(Concurred in by ORR)

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5. CAPTURE OF HOA HAO DISSIDENT LEADER BA CUT

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The capture of Hoa Hao leader Ba Cut by the Vietnamese army on 13 April is an important victory for President Diem in his long campaign against warlordism in South Vietnam. Since the surrender of Hoa Hao rebel Tran Van Soai in February, Ba Cut had been the last prominent figure in militant opposition to the government.

Recent efforts to obtain his surrender had failed despite heavy military pressure against him.

Ba Cut's followers were recently estimated at up to 3,000, about a third of whom were armed and active. The Viet Minh, having infiltrated the rebels, has been using Ba Cut's dissidence as a cover for its own activities and as an auxiliary arm of its clandestine organization in the south.

Although Ba Cut's capture removes an important asset to the Viet Minh's subversive apparatus, the Communists will attempt to retain control over those Hoa Hao elements remaining at large.

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